

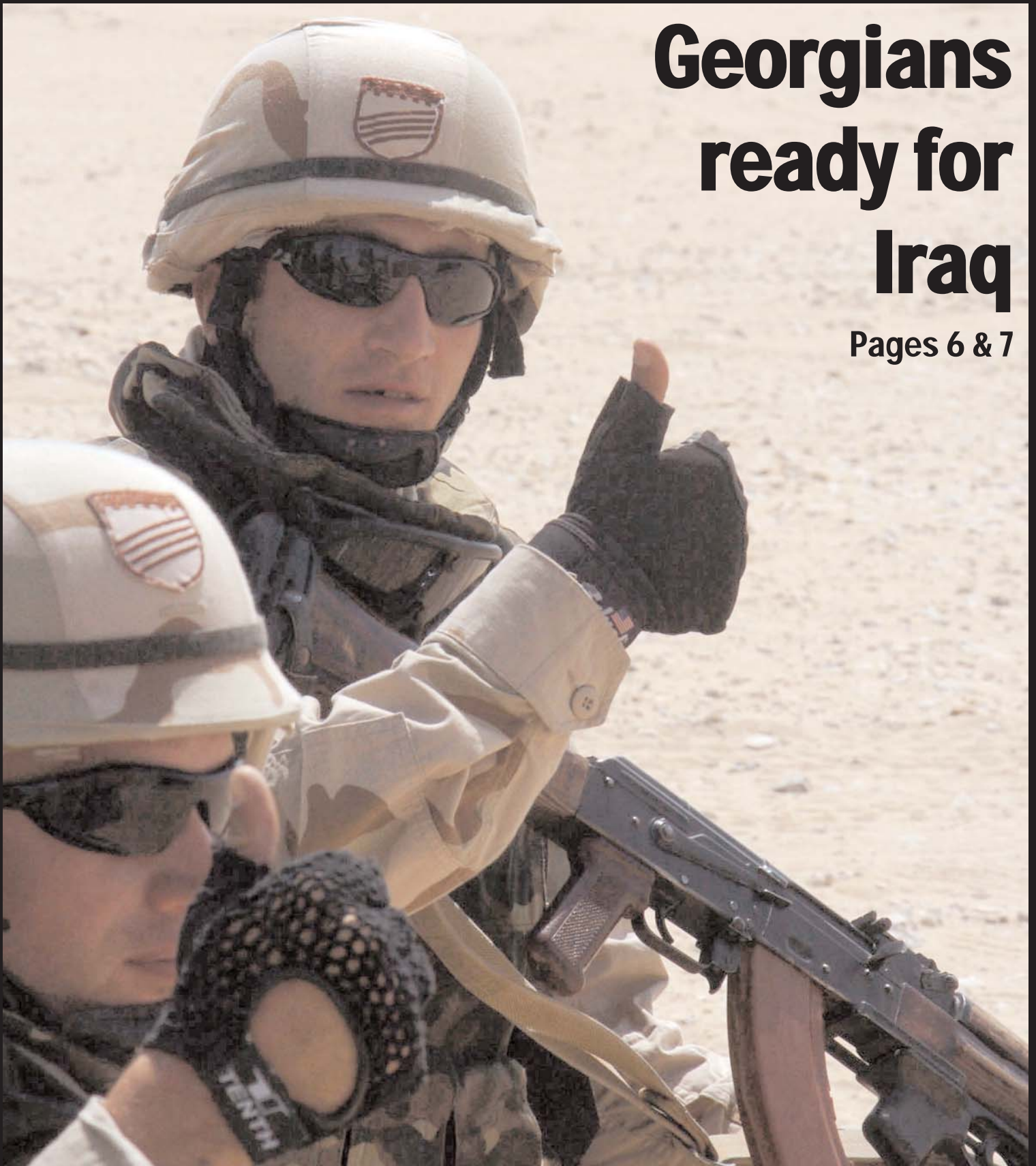
DESERT VOICE

October 5, 2005

Serving the U.S. and Coalition Forces in Kuwait

Georgians ready for Iraq

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DESERT VOICE

Volume 27, Issue 011

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Servicemembers at Camp Arifjan enjoyed an Oktoberfest celebration Sept. 24. They held a hot dog eating contest, hot dog and donut stacking competition, burping contest and a chicken dance-off. Photo by Spc. Debralee P. Crankshaw

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On the cover

Spc. Janine Coogler

Georgian soldiers give a thumbs up to signal they are ready to fire at the Udairi Range to train-up before heading into Iraq for their peace-keeping mission.

Ashe honored, excited to be Soldiers' voice

Spc. Janine Coogler
CFLCC PAO/11th PAD

Command Sgt. Maj. Franklin G. Ashe, the newly appointed command sergeant major of Third U.S. Army, U.S. Army Forces Central Command and Coalition Forces Land Component Command, spoke with the *Desert Voice* about his goals, expectations and commitment to helping Soldiers.

With 30 years of Army experience, Ashe spoke of the importance of good leadership, teamwork and positive thinking.

Q What are your goals for 3rd Army, USARCENT and CFLCC?

A Accomplish the mission and take care of the Soldiers. Be good ambassadors for our country with our allies over here.

Q How do you plan on covering the area of responsibility?

A I am going to have to roam the battlefield, develop priorities and see where I need to be to have the most impact in a positive way. It is going to be challenging, but it is a positive challenge. It's exciting. I am looking forward to it. The most important thing for me in the process is to be where I have the most impact on our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines to take care of them and support them as they do the mission.

Q What are your expectations?

A For everyone to be professional, live the Army values, warrior ethos and the Soldier's creed.

You don't come into any job with certain expectations. Initially, up front, you see what is going on. What's bothering people, what is not. How we do this, How we do that. What are the policies? What does the boss want, what do the privates want? Try to affect that in a positive way, and find a good balance while still accomplishing the mission. I have to remind young Soldiers that you might not always have what you want, but you will always have what you need. So don't take anything for granted, and remember the glass is half full.

Q How will the Army transformation effect Soldiers here?

A The Army has been transforming for a few years now. If Soldiers start looking at the little things, things have changed all around them: our uniforms to the Army Combat Uniform, rapid fielding initiative - you know, the good equipment, the socks, the t-shirts, all those little things - it is part of the transformation.

They all have probably heard of base realignment and closure, it is part of the transformation, too. It is a part of the Army being relevant. In order for us to be relevant we have to change, modernize. We have to configure ourselves in such a manner where we fight in the most effective way and maximize our weapons ... to deploy.

So the transformation is affecting all of us, we are in the middle of it as we fight this war. But it is a positive change. It is an exciting time to be in the Army because the changes that we are making are for the better.

Q How will being the command sergeant major here be different from being the command sergeant major of the 25th Infantry Division?

A In a division, it is not as large of an organization, it is not as multifunctional, or normally spread out. It is going to be harder to take care of Soldiers because they are spread out. The rest of it is the same. Being a noncommissioned officer, leading by example, accomplishing the mission, taking care of Soldiers and families, the leadership part is the same just the geography and the type of units change.

Q How does it feel to be here as command sergeant major of 3rd Army, ARCENT and CFLCC?

A Honored and excited to have been given the opportunity. It is such a unique opportunity to be able to work at this level as a NCO. To be able to take care of servicemembers and officers in this type of command. The reason I am here is to be the voice of servicemembers to the commander and to also be the eyes and ears for the commander so that he knows what impact his decisions are having on servicemembers.

Q What helped to lead you to the position you are in now?

A First off, I have been very fortunate to always have good leaders training me - great NCOs and officers have been around that have always showed me what right looks like and made me train to standard and impressed upon me to always do the right thing.

As far as personal accomplishments, I didn't quit. A 30-year career in the Army is like a long foot march, you've got to keep putting one foot in front of the other, stay on the right azimuth and don't quit.

I made sure that I did things to separate me from my peers in a positive way by voluntarily taking the tough demanding training and asking for the tough demanding leadership positions. I am here from great leader-

ship ... family support ... and great subordinates.

Q Why are there different living conditions for Soldiers?

A My first priority for Soldiers is that everybody has a roof over their head and a bed to lie on. Second, is how nice we could possibly make it, from air conditioning to privacy and all of those things. Soldiers have to remember that we can't build all the permanent buildings we want. This is Kuwaiti land. For example, the PCBs are temporary buildings but the reason we put them up was the only alternative was tents. So a PCB is still better than a tent. And they still have electricity, air conditioning, have a bed and it is a hard building in terms of protection from the environment... This is not a situation where you can make a decision that is going to please everyone. We just have to do what is right to the most people that we can as fairly as we can. I understand there is a have, have-not issue out there, but what I want people to know is that the change of command is aware of the issue, but what we are doing is making sure we are as fair as we can with what we've got.

I understand that the Soldiers want the same quality of life they had at home, but serving in the military there is always sacrifice. You know we have Soldiers up in Iraq sacrificing their lives.

Q Any words of encouragement to servicemembers?

A All servicemembers need to remember that they are important. Regardless of their rank, job, duty position, type of service: active, National Guard or Reserve - you are important. What you are doing every day in your military job, whatever it is, is contributing to this war, and it doesn't get anymore important than that.

It is about standards and discipline. It is about what is good for the group and not the individual, so you might not always agree with what we are doing, but remember we are doing it in a manner that is best for the group, whether it is how we are living or eating.



Command Sgt. Maj. Ashe

Remember sacrifices, honor fallen

Maj. Jackie Guthrie

377th Theater Support Command Public Affairs

Two empty pairs of boots, two Kevlar helmets, dog tags, rifles and two photographs represented Sgt. Andrew Wallace and Spc. Michael Wendling in a memorial service Friday.

The 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry Regiment, Wisconsin Army National Guard, remembered the two Soldiers of Company C, who died Sept. 26 when their vehicle struck an improvised explosive device on a routine convoy in southern Iraq.

"This is about honoring Sgt. Wallace and Spc. Wendling," said Capt. Eric Schack, Co. C commander. "This is about honoring their commitment to this deployment. It's about honoring their commitment to their fellow Soldiers. This is about honoring their contributions to the freedom of our country and Iraq."

Three Soldiers, childhood friends of the fallen, spoke words of tribute.

"I've come to the conclusion that it is not easy to sum up a man's life with a few feeble words," said Sgt. Jake Paulson about his comrade Sgt. Andrew Wallace.

He added, "I know I will never do him justice but I will do my best.

"Andrew to some, Wally to his friends and Sgt. Wallace to us here, asked me about the National Guard about seven years ago," Paulson explained.

This conversation marked the beginning of Wallace's military career. To the ranks of the Wisconsin Guard Wallace brought a positive attitude, a strong work ethic and a corny sense of humor. He also brought his best friend, Sgt. Dan Kelm.

Wallace and Kelm, with Paulson and Sgt. Mathew Mabee, traveled side by side on the roads of Iraq, escorting military and civilian convoys filled with essential equipment and supplies to U.S. and Coalition Forces in the north.

Paulson and Mabee gave testimonies of Wallace's self-sacrifice, but Wallace made the ultimate sacrifice when he passed his brothers-in-arms and took point position on the convoy.

"It seems unfortunate for Andrew that he passed us that morning not knowing what lay ahead," Mabee said. "But I know that he would not have wanted it any other way. He would have wanted to go through that entrance before any of us if it meant we could live."

"We just need to keep him and his team's



Maj. Jackie Guthrie

Maj. Andy Ratzlaff, a former member of the 2nd Bn., 127th Inf. pays tribute to the unit's fallen heroes.

sacrifices in our hearts as we continue forward on this deployment and in life," Mabee said.

"All we can do now is carry out our mission, because that is what Andrew and Michael Wendling would want us to do," Paulson said. "We cannot let our cowardly enemy shake our core values. They want to win by throwing fear into our hearts. We need to stand up a little bit taller now and let them know you don't mess with men from Wisconsin, men who are not afraid to lay down their lives for their country like Wally and Wendling."

"Gentlemen, I know we will never be able to hear 'Taps' or see an American flag again without thinking of the sacrifices these men gave. We will always remember how brave Andrew and Michael were and how proud we are of them," Paulson said.

Describing Michael Wendling, Spc. Justin Schmidtquist recalled words that other Soldiers used to portray him: "Funny, great sarcastic sense of humor, morale booster, always smiling, very smart, hard worker and good Soldier.

"I first met him in seventh grade at one of our first football practices together. Little did I know that that was the start of all the fun we would have," he said.

Schmidtquist said Wendling was remembered for his made-up songs and dances, pranks and sense of humor.

"He was one of a kind and will truly be missed by all of us," Schmidtquist said. "It seems comforting to know that he was in a

truck with his best friend Jeremy Roskopf." Roskopf, the third Soldier in the vehicle that struck the IED, is receiving medical treatment for his injuries.

"They were together and making people laugh on the radio right up to the end. They signed up for the National Guard together, they played golf together and it is only fitting that they ran this mission together.

"Let's honor his memory and dedication by keeping him in our hearts as we drive on and continue our mission the way he would have wanted us to," Schmidtquist said.

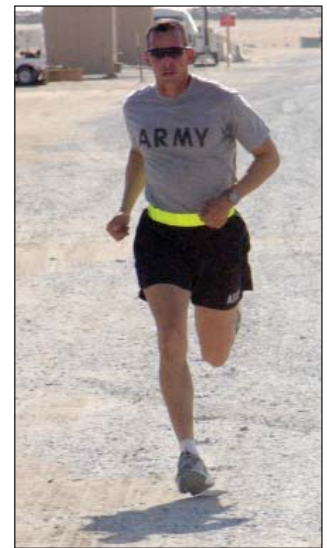
"Your death has created a void in our lives that I cannot explain," wrote Wendling's father, Randall Wendling in an e-mail read by Chap. (Maj.) Chad Maxey. Struggling through the grief of his son's death, he captured his feelings in a letter to Michael and sent it to the Soldiers of the battalion. "It is with great respect and deepest love I say to you, you are a hero to all of us."

The service continued with words of scripture, a memorial message and a prayer.

Brig. Gen. Charles Barr, 143rd Transportation Command commander, then read from a poem he and his aide, Capt. Noah Brusky, wrote to commemorate the deaths.

Silence followed as 1st Sgt. David Christianson conducted roll call, noting the two fallen Soldiers' absence.

Salutes were fired and the notes of 'Taps' hung in the desert air. The men of 2nd Bn., 127th Inf. joined leaders, fellow Soldiers and friends to say goodbye to Sgt. Andrew Wallace and Spc. Michael Wendling.



Photos by Spc. Robert Adams

(Above) Yamil Rosario sprints to the finish giving his team the gold in the four-mile relay at the Camp Victory Olympics Sept. 25. (Left) Ten Soldiers from Co. B, 1/24th Inf. pull their way to a gold medal in tug-of-war competition.

Troops race to gold at Victory Olympics

Spc. Robert Adams
Assistant Editor

Loren Masuoka ran home with three medals – winning two gold medals in the one- and two-mile races and a silver medal in the four-mile relay during the Camp Victory Olympics Sept. 24 and 25.

While Masuoka was running away with the racing medals, other troops tested their strength and athleticism in the weight-lifting, tug-of-war, basketball and ping pong events.

“The theme was based around the Olympics,” said Frank Mulder, event coordinator. “We wanted to give Soldiers something to participate in and get them motivated.”

The first-day festivities kicked off with the one-mile race, won by Masuoka.

Following the run was the ping pong tournament, a not-as-well-known Olympic event. Raymond VonGuten used his quick hand-eye coordination to defeat Donnie Goodson in the championship match.

The day concluded with the

male bench press and dead-lift competitions. Justin Hackle and Lewis Lopez medaled in both events with Hackle winning the gold medal in the bench press and the silver in the dead-lift, and Lopez earning the bronze in both.

The next day began exactly as the first day did; Masuoka won a gold medal in the two-mile race.

Next was the 3-on-3 basketball tournament. Team D-Block worked through the field of teams to take the gold medal over Victory’s Finest.

The Victory Olympics concluded with two team events: the four-mile team relay and tug of war.

Soldiers from the 166th Area Support Group won the relay race by more than a minute and a half. “It feels really good to come out on top,” said James Thompson, winning team member. Back at home Thompson is a high school cross-country and track coach, so he felt at home running on the team.

Like many other units, the 166th ASG is at Camp Victory

for a short time as part of the redeployment process. They arrived there two days prior to the Olympics and decided to participate in the events before heading back to the United States.

The festivities concluded with the tug-of-war event which decided what unit had the strongest troops on camp.

Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment muscled their way through every opponent they faced to win the 10-man event.

“I think it was great... It takes your mind off of not being home,” Thompson said.

Victory plans to hold the Olympics every quarter and invites servicemembers from every camp to participate.

“It gives Soldiers something to think about other than work ... it helps them relieve stress,” Mulder said.

The event coordinator also spoke of adding more events depending on the turnout.

Mulder said, “The participation was good and we expect it to grow.”

Victory Medalists

One-mile race

1st place – Loren Masuoka
2nd place – Sean Gaul
3rd place – Peter Bleyer

Ping Pong

1st place – Raymond VonGuten
2nd place – Donnie Goodson
3rd place – Scott Hamilton

Bench Press (Male)

1st place – Justin Hackle
2nd place – Robert Mosher
3rd place – Lewis Lopez

Bench Press (Female)

1st place – Eddie Jusino
2nd place – Anasell Ramos
3rd place – Nelida Gomez

Dead-lift (Male)

1st place – James Thompson
2nd place – Justin Hackle
3rd place – Lewis Lopez

Two-mile race

1st – Loren Masuoka
2nd – Mario Tarrats
3rd – Mickey Letourneau

3-on-3 basketball

1st place – D-Block
2nd place – Victory’s Finest
3rd place – Team Dirty

Four-Mile Relay

1st place – 166th ASG
2nd place – EMF-Dallas
3rd place – 166th ASG

Tug-of-War

1st Place – Co. B, 1/24th Inf.



Photos by Spc. Janine Coogler

During entry checkpoint training, two Georgian interpreters from the 21st Battalion explain the instructions of shooting two rounds into the targets to Georgian soldiers at Udairi Range at Camp Buehring during a two-week train-up before heading to Iraq.

Georgia trains at Virginia, Udairi

Spc. Janine Coogler
CFLCC PAO/11th PAD

It looked like an ordinary day at the Udairi Range: trucks were mounted and dismounted, weapons were loaded and pointed up and down range, and targets were constantly being gunned down.

The only difference was the trainees. Instead of U.S. Soldiers, Georgian soldiers were training at the range before sunrise.

More than 500 Georgian soldiers from the 21st Battalion began their two-week training at the Udairi Range and Camp Virginia on Sept. 12. They will be replacing the Georgian 13th Battalion.

Each soldier from the 21st Battalion went through a series of classes, convoy live fire and entry checkpoint training in preparation for their peacekeeping mission in Iraq.

Divided into platoons, the Georgian sol-

diers went through half a day of ECP training followed by half a day of convoy live fire training. Following their day at the range, the Georgians had a full day of classroom lectures such as culture awareness, criminal detention rules and regulations classes.

The Georgians did a shadow practice before putting live rounds in their weapons, said Capt. Christian Werthmuller, Task Force Gator support team officer. They quickly ran through the exercise, corrected any mistakes, and then trained with live rounds.

Instead of taking the slow crawl-walk-run pace U.S. Soldiers are used to, the Georgians took a faster pace to get more practice with live rounds, he said. They are infantry soldiers, so they have a good amount of experience with their weapons, and their leadership wanted them to move quickly in their training.

The Georgians were able to shoot plenty

of rounds, said a Military Professional Resources Incorporated instructor.

"They were quick learners. After a few pointers they had tight shot groups," he said.

"All the training is good because it will help us survive and complete our missions," said Georgian 1st Lt. Levan Mikiashvili, Company Alpha, 1st platoon leader.

With the variety of training given to the Georgian soldiers, they had a chance to learn more than weapons training.

During the convoy life fire, Georgian soldiers went through lanes that taught them how to react during different scenarios. They were taught what to do if they came across an improvised explosive device, snipers or have a broken down vehicle.

Another element of training paired U.S. Soldiers with Georgian soldiers and mentored them on all the do's and don'ts of guarding a post, said Sgt. Tom Stewart, range safety offi-



Loading his weapon, a Georgian soldier prepares to shoot live rounds at entry checkpoint training at Udairi Range at Camp Buehring.

cer.

“We had to help them with the basics; they didn’t know the three general orders. So we had to assist and guide them on the limits of their duty, who to inform and when they were relieved,” he said.

“They’re good soldiers,” he said. “They listen carefully to detail, are cooperative and stay motivated during their training.”

Although there was a communication barrier, it was overcome with help on both sides. TF Gator, the coordinators of the training, provided an Army translator to assist with the few Georgian translators.

The problem the Georgian soldiers had to overcome was distinguishing what they thought they should do from what they were being asked to do on and off the range, Stewart said.

Each training group had a translator to relay the MPRI instructors’ directions and help with constructive criticism.

As one of the MPRI instructors went to help a Georgian soldier, a Georgian non-commissioned officer stepped in and took over.

“We are here for guidance,” said an MPRI instructor. “Their leaders want to take charge because they will be with them in Iraq.”

“Overall you can see these soldiers are having a good time training,” Werthmuller said.

The Georgians were able to swap weapons with their mentors. U. S. Soldiers were able to shoot a few rounds with the Georgians AK-47s and PK machine guns, while the Georgians were able to let loose a few rounds



Georgian infantry soldiers from the 21st Battalion practice their stance and foot movement before shooting live rounds. With the help of Georgian interpreters, Military Professional Resources Incorporated instructors were able to communicate guidance.



A Georgian soldier focuses and prepares to shoot at the moving target during entry checkpoint training at Udairi Range at Camp Buehring.

with the M-16.

Werthmuller said it was a great way to end the training day. They were able to work hard, learn and have a good time with some of the U.S. Soldiers who mentored them.

Although there was a known communication barrier, the training went well, Mikiashvili said.

He added, “The goal ... was to receive hands-on training and get familiarized with our specific mission, and that was accomplished.”



Staff Sgt. Terry Ruggles

Soldiers monitor the area during their run down the convoy live fire lanes.

BSB-North takes over

317th QM Bn. says goodbye to Buehring

Spc. Michael R. Noggle

CFLCC PAO/ 11th PAD

Soldiers from the 317th Quartermaster Battalion are set to redeploy this week after serving their year-long tour as Camp Buehring's Command Cell.

The incoming unit, the Base Support Battalion-North, will assume command of Camp Buehring as well as the other northern camps in the Area Support Group-Kuwait within the next year.

As part of the incoming and outgoing ceremonial event for the two battalions, the BSB-North colors will stand its flag at the command cell and never come down during their tenure. The unit and soon to be BSB-South will serve under ASG-Kuwait.

"The BSB-North will have Camps Buehring, Victory, Navistar, Virginia and Ali Al Salem Air Base under its command and eventually the BSB-South will have Camp Arifjan and Kuwait Naval Base," said Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Catalon, BSB-North command sergeant major.

"Once in command and control of Camp Buehring, my job is to stand up the base of force for the battalion north," said Lt. Col. Clinton Pendergast, BSB-North commander. "Eventually we will take command and control of all the northern camps and all aspects of the northern camps."

Pendergast said there will be a lot of work ahead for his unit but feels their training prior to the change-over has been more than helpful.

"The transition I believe will go very smoothly," he said. "Mainly because the 317th provided exceptional Soldiers to left-seat, right-seat ride with Soldiers of the base support battalion, which facilitated the learning with our mission here to run the camp."

"The command group has been here for some time now, and they are totally aware of the challenges ahead," said Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Massaglia, 317th QM Bn. command sergeant major. "I have no doubt in my mind they will make the same kind of improvements in the next year that we were able to make this past year."

Over the year, the command at Camp Buehring staged more than 70,000 Soldiers heading into Iraq, Massaglia said. They have added another dining facility and have worked with the BSB-North command in building a new gym.

"The expertise from some of our Soldiers really paid off," he said. "We had this talent that stepped up and got things done and we're very proud of what we got accomplished and the experience each Soldier gained."

While the 317th QM Bn. remains proud of their achievements during the year, the BSB-North knows what lies ahead for their deployment.

"We have a lot of work ahead of us and the camp, but we expect it and we're ready," Catalon said.

Pendergast said, "as the 317th did, they hit the ground running ... we're doing the same."



Spc. Michael R. Noggle

Col. Brick T. Miller, ASG-Kuwait commander passes the BSB-North colors to Lt. Col. Clinton Pendergast, BSB-North commander, who assumes command of the new unit.

A night of jokes, laughs



Spc. Michael R. Noggle

(Above) Soldiers from Camp Arifjan had plenty to laugh at as comedians Dave Attell and Scott Kennedy toured parts of Kuwait for their USO comedy show Sept. 22. **(Right)** Dave Attell observes the crowd of nearly 500 Soldiers.



PH2 Gregory Devereaux

Military gains from servicemembers' hard work...

Engineers build foundation that moves troops north

Spc. Robert Adams

Assistant Editor

Around the clock, their work never stops. These Soldiers sweat so future servicemembers can live under better conditions and move faster to complete their missions.

Soldiers from the 844th Engineer Battalion, an Army Reserve unit headquartered out of Knoxville, Tenn., have completed a total of 398 missions so far on military installations in Kuwait.

The combat heavy engineer battalion is in charge of working on all construction projects in Kuwait to include forming and paving roads, building berms, portable living areas and maintenance shelters, installing plumbing and electricity and leveling land.

"Our job is to support the infrastructure of Kuwait and do what needs to be done to move troops north," said Maj. Erik S. Taylor, 844th Eng. Bn. executive officer.

"Soldiers are sleeping in tents we constructed and driving on roads we built. We've been instrumental in providing life support for Soldiers."

Some of the major projects completed have been at Camp Buehring, the final site for Soldiers to test equipment and receive training before they roll north into Iraq.

The unit added 30 to 50 percent more acreage to Buehring by extending the outside berms, built the new 210-acre ammunition supply point, and paved the roads of the convoy live fire portion of the Udairi Range.

"This has really made an impact for units deploying to Iraq," said Maj. Jim Daffron, 844th Eng. Bn. operations officer.

The unit has even built bench seating in Bradley Fighting Vehicles and frames under the vehicles to store bags for units heading into battle.

"We might not be the ones fighting up north ... but it feels good to help the troops before they do," said Spc. James Robinson, Bravo Company, 844th Eng. Bn. equipment operator.

The unit has also transformed much of Camp Arifjan. Soldiers built a loading dock and put up pre-engineered buildings all over camp, and in Zone 6 they added a sewer system, formed gravel parking areas, and are finishing up paving roads and building a new sports-field complex there.

"It's nice to see that the camp can grow due to our work," said Sgt. Sean Watson, Headquarters Support Company, 844th Eng. Bn. equipment operator.



Spc. Robert Adams

Spc. Jarrett White, HSC, 844th Eng. Bn. heavy equipment operator, removes an excess piece of asphalt while paving a road at Camp Arifjan's Zone 6. The unit has completed a total of 398 missions so far on military camps in Kuwait.

"It makes me feel good to improve this place," added Spc. Jarrett White, HSC, 844th Eng. Bn. heavy equipment operator. "They keep us busy."

The unit has also gotten the chance to send troops to southern Iraq for force protection engineer missions and to Egypt where they participated in Operation Bright Star by providing electrical, plumbing and construction support.

The Soldiers have put in many hours under the sun helping transform each camp.

"About 95 percent of the work we do is physically strenuous and dangerous," said Staff Sgt. Richard Blair, Co. B, 844th Eng. Bn. construction site supervisor.

"There is a lot of grunt work ... which can be a physically demanding aspect."

To deploy here, the battalion, which is made up of a headquarters company and three line units, had to add many cross-level and Individual Ready Reserve Soldiers to its ranks. The unit deployed with Soldiers from 38 states.

"I consider it a cross-section of America," Taylor said.

It's hard coming into a unit already established ... but after awhile you become apart of the team, said Sgt. Timothy Ney, B Co., 844th Eng. Bn., who cross-leveled from a reserve unit in Idaho.

This is also many Soldiers' first time in the field, so they have gotten the opportunity to learn many different engineering job fields.

"Since this is many Soldiers' first deployment ... they have to think on their feet and take what they have learned at one site to the

next," Blair said.

"I have gotten the chance to learn a lot about engineering and construction," said Robinson, who deployed to Kuwait right after basic and advanced training. "I have enjoyed the experience and want to come back as a civilian contractor."

The unit arrived here in December and hopes to be home before Christmas.

"We started running the day we got off the plane ... started building 15 kilometers of berms," Taylor said.

When the unit is at home it is preparing to go to war. It did this by building bridges and park projects in Tennessee and through real-world missions out of the country in Central America and Europe.

"We are performing a war-time mission now ... but even if they weren't deployed they would be performing real-world missions abroad," Taylor said.

In the past three years, the battalion has been deployed to Germany to build an urban-warfare training site, to Romania to build one school and refurbish another, and to Guatemala to build two schools and help with a third.

"As an engineer construction asset ... we get a lot of opportunities to go overseas and build things," said Capt. Marty Lepak, Headquarters Support Company, 844th Eng. Bn. battle captain. "We have something to show what we've done after we are finished."

The unit is on the last stretch of its deployment and the Soldiers are proud of their work.

Ney said, "It's nice to be able to help out and know you accomplished something."

Courtesy photo
Two Soldiers watch as oil fields burn in Kuwait following Operation Desert Storm.



“Fires of Kuwait”

Arifjan holds cultural event, learns about Kuwaiti history

Staff Sgt. Terry Ruggles

377th Theater Support Command Public Affairs

The smoke was thick and black and a greasy film covered everything. Day became night and the sun was nothing more than a memory.

The fires burned relentlessly, spreading the smoke so far that astronauts could see it from space with the naked eye.

This was the scene in Kuwait after Iraqi forces left the country wrecked and burning in 1991, as shown at “The Fires of Kuwait,” cultural event held Sept. 24. The movie detailed the oil fires started by Saddam Hussein’s retreating Iraqi army, the environmental and economic devastation that followed and the remarkable recovery of Kuwait and its people.

According to the film, more than 600 oil wells were set on fire and burned an estimated five million barrels of crude oil each day. Oil firefighting teams battled 2,000 degree temperatures as they extinguished the flames. They put out an average of three oil well fires a day, with a record high of 13 in one day

and 52 in one week.

At the peak of the fires, 5,000 tons of smoke cast a plume 800 miles long every day – making the environmental hazard visible from space.

Capt. Raheem Muhammed-Terrell, chairman of CFLCC’s Cultural Awareness Group, hosted the event and said that the purpose was to teach military and civilian personnel more about the people outside of the camp.

“We have to endeavor to learn about their culture and this country’s history, values and beliefs,” he said.

Terrell added that this is the first in a series of events planned for all of the bases in Kuwait his team his planning to host in the next year.

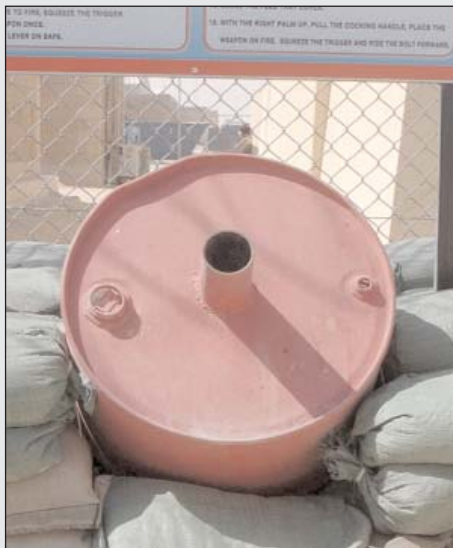
After the movie, Saud Al-Nashmi, International Petroleum Consultancy president; Sulaiman Ali Al-Mansouri, Petrochemical Industries Company senior store keeper; and Dr. Teresa Leshner, Arab Western Awareness Relations Center general manager, fielded questions from an audience of more than 150 military and civilian personnel.

“The first oil fires were put out because the smoke was heading into a hospital and was so thick it was almost killing the patients,” said Al-Nashmi in his opening remarks, explaining how firefighters prioritized their work.

The panel also explained how workers cleaned the oil from the sand surrounding the wells and talked about the health problems the local populace suffered from the smoke.

“The sickness and health problems I didn’t think about,” said Sgt. 1st Class Charles Davis, from CFLCC’s Army Reserve Affairs office after the event. “Some of it was very interesting, stuff we didn’t hear on the news like how they controlled the fires,” he said. “It was very educational, especially for young Soldiers who may not have any memory of this.”

The oil well fires created environmental and economic disasters that nearly crippled the country. The perseverance of the people in Kuwait, with help from many around the world, turned the disaster in to a remarkable triumph of the fortitude and will of Kuwait and her people.



Negligent discharges need to be stopped

♦ They pose a significant risk to the safety of all personnel.

♦ To deter any negligent discharge of firearms and to properly document their occurrences, every O-6 level commander within the Coalition Forces Land Component Command area of responsibility will ensure that any negligent discharge caused by anyone within their command is immediately investigated and reported to the first general or flag officer in the chain of command.

♦ If an investigation concludes that an individual did in fact negligently discharge his weapon, he shall receive an administrative general officer memorandum of reprimand or written censure.

♦ Commanders shall coordinate advice and support for enforcing this policy with their supporting judge advocates.

♦ Judge advocates shall report the status of investigations and administrative reprimands under this policy to the CFLCC Staff Judge Advocate.

Community

happenings for Oct. 5 through Oct. 12

Arifjan

Wednesday

Pingpong tournament, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center
Soccer league, through Nov. 5, Zone 1 soccer field

Mexican Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage

Thursday

Ballroom dancing, 8 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Soccer league, through Nov. 5, Zone 1 soccer field

Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Friday

Friday Fright Night at the Movies, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

ASG - Kuwait Beach Volleyball championship, 8 a.m., Zone 1 volleyball court

Soccer league, through Nov. 5, Zone 1 soccer field

Arifjan Boxing Team, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6

Fitness Center

Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

Saturday

ASG - Kuwait Beach Volleyball championship, 8 a.m., Zone 1 volleyball court

Soccer league, through Nov. 5, Zone 1 soccer field

Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 food court

Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage

Sunday

NFL games, 8 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

ASG - Kuwait Beach Volleyball championship, 8 a.m., Zone 1 volleyball court

Soccer league, through Nov. 5, Zone 1 soccer field

Monday

Columbus Day Softball Tournament, 8

a.m., Zone 1 softball field

Soccer league, through Nov. 5, Zone 1 soccer field

Arifjan Boxing Team, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 Fitness Center

Tuesday

Ballroom dancing, 8 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Bingo Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

Soccer league, through Nov. 5, Zone 1 soccer field

Wednesday

Soccer league, through Nov. 5, Zone 1 soccer

field

Mexican Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage

For more information call

430-1205/1302

Buehring

Wednesday

Walking Club (5 miles), 5 a.m., command cell flagpole

Thursday

Walking Club (5 miles), 5 a.m., command cell flagpole

Tae-Kwon-Do class, 7 p.m., MWR Tent 1

Friday

101st Army Band, 7:30 p.m., MWR stage

Walking Club (5 miles), 5 a.m., command cell flagpole

Saturday

Bazaar

Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., MWR Tent 1

Sunday

Bazaar

Walking Club (10 miles), 4:30 a.m., command cell flagpole

Monday

Walking Club (5 miles), 5 a.m., command cell flagpole

Tuesday

Walking Club (5 miles), 5 a.m., command cell flagpole

Tae-Kwon-Do class, 7 p.m., MWR Tent 1

Wednesday

Walking Club (5 miles), 5 a.m., command cell flagpole

For more information call

828-1340

Kuwait Naval Base

For information call 839-1063

Navistar

Tuesday

Bazaar day, 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., basketball court

Smoking cessation class, 10 a.m., chapel

Education awareness/prevention, 1 p.m., chapel

For more information call

844-1137

Spearhead/SPOB

For information call 825-1302

Victory

Wednesday

King Edward's Castle Chess tournament, 6 - 9 p.m.

Thursday

Free throw challenge, 6 - 9 p.m.

Aerobics, 5 a.m., MWR

Friday

Ultimate Frisbee tournament, 6 - 9 p.m.

Saturday

Ultimate Frisbee tournament, 6 - 9 p.m.

Sunday

Ultimate Frisbee championship game

Monday

Columbus Day 5K

Tuesday

Aerobics, 5 a.m., MWR

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Fall Football training camp, 3 - 5 p.m.

Wednesday

High Roller Texas Hold 'em tournament, 6 - 9:30 p.m.

Fall Football training camp, 3 - 5 p.m.

For more information call

823-1033

Virginia

Wednesday

Bench and pull-ups, 4 p.m., Gym

Country Night, 7 p.m., Dusty Room

Thursday

Karaoke Night, 8 p.m., Dusty Room

Friday

Foosball, 7 p.m., MWR Tent

Salsa Night, 8 p.m., Dusty Room

Saturday

Dominoes, 7 p.m., Dusty Room

R&B, Hip Hop Night, 8 p.m., Dusty Room

Sunday

Volleyball, 5 vs. 5, 6 p.m., volleyball courts

Old School Jams, 8 p.m., Dusty Room

Monday

Billiards singles and doubles tournament, 7 p.m., Sports Lounge

Tuesday

Bingo, 7 p.m., Dusty Room

Rock and Techno Night, 8 p.m., Dusty Room

Wednesday

Horseshoes, 4 p.m., horseshoe pits

Country Night, 7 p.m., Dusty Room

For more information call

832-1045

Does your unit have an upcoming event? Do you have an interesting story to tell? Send them to the *Desert Voice* editor e-mail address listed on page 2.

Oktoberfest fun

